

# **VARNVILLE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**

June 11, 2012 @ 7:00 PM

(I)

## **Call to Order**

Officials present were Mayor Nathaniel “Nat” A. Shaffer, Councilmen Ralph Smith, Henry Tuten, H. Alexander Campbell, Adam Major, and Ronald Williams, Police Chief Tyrone Smith, Public Works Director, Robert “Bobby” Edwards, Town Attorney, Kevin Brown, Clerk of Court, Reneé Bennett, and Secretary to the Mayor and Council, Amy Roberts. Absent were Mayor Pro-Tem, Lloyd “Tootie” H. Griffith, Jr. and Fire Chief Dobie Hiers.

Among the general population in attendance were Brenda Willis, Billy Henderson, Martha Ann Bazzle, Don DeLoach, Scott Malphrus, Cathy Watson, Thomas Watson, and Miss Varnville, Rachael Colleen Long.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Shaffer. The invocation was given by Councilman Campbell and the Pledge of Allegiance followed. Amy Roberts gave the FOIA Compliance Report stating that the meeting agenda was faxed to all media outlets and posted outside the town hall on June 7, 2012.

Mayor Shaffer presented the minutes for approval from the council meetings held on May 14, 2012, May 21, 2012, and May 30, 2012. Council Campbell made a motion that all three sets of minutes be accepted for approval and Councilman Major seconded the motion. All members were in favor.

(II)

## **Introduction and/or requests of visitors**

Mayor Shaffer recognized former mayor, Don DeLoach and acknowledged the general public in attendance. Mayor Shaffer then introduced Miss Varnville, Rachael Colleen Long. Rachael briefly addressed the council by reading her bio and introducing her family.

(III)

## **Financial report**

See Unfinished Business

(IV)

## **Unfinished Business**

The financial report was incorporated with the final reading of the 2012-2013 budget. Mayor Shaffer presented the council with a proposed budget of \$1,878,430.00 in total revenue and \$1,878,430.00 in total expenses. The mayor stated that the town has saved nearly \$40,000 on salaries in the absence of a clerk/treasurer and saved \$12,500 on zoning and planning with a

comprehensive plan still underway. Chief Smith saved the town \$5,000 in inmate fees by negotiating with the county. Mayor Shaffer said we can expect to see an increase in the cost of electricity as rates are steadily rising. The town has saved a lot of money on insurance premiums by implementing a risk safety program and educating employees. Mayor Shaffer said that the budget looks good and Varnville is running more efficiently than it has in years. Councilman Tuten made a motion to adopt the 2012-2013 budget and Councilman Smith seconded the motion. All members were in favor.

Mayor Shaffer gave the second and final reading of Ordinance 2012-03 authorizing an agreement for the transfer of water and sewer assets to Lowcountry Regional Water Systems. Councilman Campbell made a motion to adopt the ordinance and Councilman Williams seconded the motion. All members were in favor. Mayor Shaffer stated that he thinks the transfer is promising and appreciates everybody's cooperation.

(V)

#### **Reports of Department Heads and Committees**

**Police Department:** Police Chief Tyrone Smith informed the council that there have been multiple burglaries in Varnville in recent weeks. He asked the citizens to call 9-1-1 if they see any suspicious characters near their homes.

**Fire Department:** No report in the absence of Fire Chief Dobie Hiers

**Department of Public Works:** Director of Public Works, Bobby Edwards, reported that his employees are almost through edging the streets in Varnville in preparation for the Hampton County Watermelon Festival.

**Clerk Treasurer's Office:** Nothing to report

**Mayor's Office:** Mayor Shaffer reminded the council of the Municipal Association of South Carolina's Annual Meeting in Hilton Head from June 28, 2012 to July 1, 2012.

(VI)

#### **New Business**

Mayor Shaffer presented the council with a request from the South Carolina Department of Transportation to remove a portion of East Pine Street in Varnville from its records. This particular section of East Pine Street is overgrown and completely wooded. Mayor Shaffer met with Jack Priester regarding this matter and stated that the Town of Varnville and SCDOT have a good working relationship. Town Attorney, Kevin Brown, recommended that SCDOT give a quick claim deed on the property to the town. Councilman Tuten made a motion to approve SCDOT's request and Councilman Campbell seconded the motion. All members were in favor.

(VII)

**Old Business**

None

(VIII)

**Council members' concerns/comments**

Councilman Williams expressed concern about a mosquito problem in Varnville. Mr. Edwards stated that Bug Busters has already sprayed five times.

Councilman Major thanked Mr. Edwards and his crew for keeping the town looking good.

Councilman Campbell had no comments.

Councilman Smith thanked the town workers for doing a good job, but expressed continued concern about a dog problem in his neighborhood. Mr. Edwards informed Councilman Campbell that he has put out traps and recently carried one dog to the pound. Mayor Shaffer said the town would take action to fix the problem.

Councilman Tuten remarked that Mr. Edwards may not have had time to actively trap dogs as he has been spending time on town beautification in preparation of the Hampton County Watermelon Festival. Councilman Tuten thanked Mr. Edwards for making necessary repairs to the shed where the garbage truck is housed. He also commended Chief Smith and Major Bobby Anderson on their professionalism as he worked with them recently on a matter. Councilman Tuten thanked Mayor Shaffer for the work he did on the 2012-2013 budget.

Mayor Shaffer stated the town has a comprehensive dog ordinance but it may need to be amended to include a leash law. The mayor said the town decided not to get a float for the Watermelon Festival parade since candy cannot be thrown to the kids. However, the mayor will ride in the parade in a personal vehicle representing the town and several councilmen will ride in a town vehicle on behalf of the town. Also, Miss Varnville will be in a personal vehicle representing the town.

(IX)

**Adjournment**

Mayor Shaffer called for a motion to adjourn at 7:35 PM. Councilman Campbell made a motion to adjourn. Councilman Smith seconded the motion. All members were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Roberts  
Secretary to Mayor and Council